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# Speak Out Now

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## Everything to Lose - A World to Win

On September 20 an estimated four to five million people in 185 countries, mostly young people, took the streets in protest against fossil fuels, pipelines, and the banks and politicians that fund them.

Parts of the world are on fire while others are flooded. Last year the city of Paradise was burned to the ground in California's deadliest wildfire. Large areas of the Amazon Rainforest are on fire. July saw record breaking heat and glacier and sea ice melt. Coastal cities are flooding and sinking due to sea level rise. In other areas drought is causing water shortages and crop failure. People are being pushed from their homes because the land can no longer provide for them. The scientists saw this all coming. And last year the IPCC, an international coalition of scientists, gave us 12 years to act before facing climate catastrophe.

Fossil fuel companies - the most responsible for fueling climate change - have known since the 1970's that drastic climate change was an imminent threat. That was over 40 years ago. Instead of informing the public and responding to prevent this disaster, they waged a campaign of climate change denial while climate-proofing their oil rigs.

Politicians have known this. U.S. government science reports have warned every administration since 1965 about climate change. But no real action has been taken. They can't and won't shut down the business interests that are the basis of the economy, no matter how much they destroy life on the Earth.

Today the global economy runs on fossil fuels. Massive investments rely on these petrochemicals - from energy infrastructure, to industrial agricultural, to the manufacturing of plastics and pharmaceuticals. Giving up these massive investments to save the planet is not an option for those who own and control these industries. In their drive for profits, they will increase oil extraction, increase production of

petrochemicals such as plastic and pesticides, and increase the risk of the end of life as we know it.

The world doesn't have to function this way. Climate catastrophe is not inevitable. Alternative technologies exist and more can be developed. There is also an alternative to this system of capitalism that puts profits and constant expansion before all else, including our future existence - socialism

Increasing numbers of people are seeing the need to oppose the insanity of this system. Young people are right to be furious about the future they are confronting. Either we act now or we could very likely face a world that is uninhabitable for most life in another decade. Greta Thunberg, a 16-year old Swedish student, who started the weekly climate strikes, said: "There is no middle ground when it comes to the climate and ecological emergency." Either we fight or this climate crisis will engulf us.

That's why we'll need to go beyond marching in the streets. We can't spread alarm about the climate emergency, and then rely on the politicians and companies that fueled it in the first place. They won't solve this. It's up to us. We need a response that matches the scale of the emergency. We need to take this momentum and use it to organize ourselves against the system that profits from destroying the planet. We need to put the interests of humanity and the planet first. We need to get rid of capitalism.

We can't afford to go about our daily lives, planning for a future that won't exist if we don't rapidly change things. The time to act is now - we have everything to lose, and a world to win!

### **THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

**THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS**

A presentation and Discussion

**SATURDAY, SEPT. 28, 7PM** (Doors open at 6:30) **S. BERKELEY SENIOR CENTER, 2919 ELLIS ST, BERKELEY** (near Ashby BART) \$5 - No one turned away for lack of funds